Haman and Mordecai.

Mr. *Holland's* Fast-Sermon,

April, 4. 1701.

Haman and *Mordecai.*

A FAST-SERMON,

Preach'd in the

Pariſh Church of St. *MAGNUS the Martyr*, by *London-Bridge*, on *Friday*, *April* 4. 1701.

Publiſhed at the Requeſt of Several of the Chief Auditors.

By *RICHARD HOLLAND*, M. A. Chaplain to his Grace the D. of **Richmond**, Curate of St. *Magnus*, and Lecturer of *Alhallows the Great.*

BIBLIOTHECA HOLKHAMIANA

LONDON:

Printed by *R. Janeway*, and are to be Sold by *Walter Kettleby*, at the *Biſhop's-head* in St. *Paul's* Church-Yard, and *John Back*, at the *Black-Boy* on *London-Bridge*, 1701.

16

Haman and Mordecai.

TO lament and bewail our Sins, and the Sins of the whole Nation; to deprecate God's Wrath; to implore his Mercy and Relief, his Favour and Assistance, his Protection and Blessing upon the great Council *of the Nation now Assembled in* Parliament, *upon our* Established Church, *and the whole* Protestant Interest; *that the destroying* Angel *may come no nearer to us; but that this Storm which is risen may soon blow over, and we all enjoy again a Blessed Calm; this is or ought to be the Business of this Day, and may well justifie our Obedience to Authority in these our present Solemnities.*

Let me crave then your Diligence and Attention, while I discover to you the Goodness, Power and Wisdom of the Great God, *the* God Mighty in Deliverance, *the* God *of* Refuge *in all time of* Trouble, *with the Way and Means that will incline him to be* our Deliverer *in this Day of* Visitation; *which I hope to do from these Words, you will find Written in*

ESTHER VI. 13.

And Haman *told* Zeresh *his Wife, and all his Friends, every thing that had befallen him; then said his wise Men, and* Zeresh *his Wife to him, if* Mordecai *be of the Seed of the Jews, before whom thou hast begun to fall, thou shalt not prevail against him, but shalt certainly fall before him.*

THE History to which the Words relate, in short is this; *Haman* a proud Courtier, yet most mighty Favourite in King

Ahaſuerus his Court, obſerving an honeſt *Jew* to neglect to compliment and fawn upon him, amongſt the reſt of his cringing Flatterers, reſolv'd not only upon his Ruin, but for his ſake, the Ruin alſo of the whole Body of the *Jews*, the then People of *God*: Tho' it fortuned that Perſon *Mordecai* had deſerv'd well from the *King* and *Government*, having newly diſcover'd an intended Aſſaſſination of the *King*, and thereby ſaved the *King*'s Life. Notwithſtanding which, the mighty *Haman* would have no Mercy, but preſently provided an Extraordinary Gallows for *Mordecai*, and Plotted alſo at one time to Maſſacre all the *Jews*.

The Piety, Prudence and Courage of *Queen Eſther* prevented all this; who by the help and bleſſing of God inclined the Heart of the *King* to ſave both her faithful Friend *Mordecai*, and all her People juſt laid out for Deſtruction; and a lucky Accident alſo diverted the Royal Fury from the Innocent to the Cruel, and fixed it upon *Haman* and all his bloody Officers.

Juſt at the turning of that mighty Tide in that Court, *Haman*'s *Wife and Counſellors* foreſee and admoniſh him of his Fall and Ruin in theſe Words: *If* Mordecai *be of the Seed*

Seed of the Jews, before whom thou haſt begun to fall, thou ſhalt not prevail againſt him, but ſhall certainly fall before him; intimating, that no one but may eaſily obſerve an eſpecial Hand of *God* upon his peculiar People the Jews; they and their Friends proſper, when their Enemies always fall before them: Which will afford us noble Doctrine and Application, ſuitable to the ſolemn Exerciſes of this Day.

That the Men of this World; thoſe whoſe Converſation is moſtly in the Pleaſures, and Profits, and Honours thereof; that Men of Eaſe, Paſſion, and Bigotry, have ever eſpouſed Quarrels with Virtue and the Religious, the Good, Honeſt and Undeſigning Men; that they have proſecuted theſe to Deaths oft, or at leaſt to moſt cruel Treatments; no Age of the World, no part of Chriſtendom, I'm ſure reform'd *England* was never ſo happy as to be long Ignorant of: But which ſtill makes for the honour of true Piety, and encouragement of honeſt Men, there was never any ſuch Perſecution, there was never any ſuch Plot againſt true Religion and its Proſelites, but it either failed by a total Miſcarriage; or tho' ſeeming ſomewhat proſperous at Firſt, made a greater Advance to the Honour of *God*; Divine Pro-

vidence order'd it ſo, that either it ſhould not take, or if it did, *God* ſhould thereby much more be glorified. By which it cannot but appear, that that *God* for whom they ſuffer, finds himſelf obliged in ſome meaſure to Vindicate himſelf, and cauſe to head and defend his Friends and willing Subjects, to baffle and confront his Adverſaries: The Diſpute is truly with him, the Contrivance is laid for him, his Service and Honour; I will up then, (*ſays God*) I will ariſe and avenge me of my Adverſaries; thoſe that would not I ſhould reign over them, I'le anſwer and engage them.

This has ever been notorious to the World: In the Days of *Ahaſuerus*, the buſineſs of the Text, all ſorts of People could not but obſerve it; and the Friends of that great Conſpirator there themſelves awaited and expected the Defeat; they did not only doubt of the Project, but with great Confidence predict the Diſappointment.

Haman indeed, proud, uneaſie, diſcontented and revengeful *Haman*, lays his cruel Plot deep againſt honeſt *Mordecai*, the Favourite of the *Almighty*, and Friend of the *Queen*; he deſperately contrives and reſolves his Overthrow, and after him intended the

ſame

ſame to the whole Church of God, all the Family of the *Jews*, and was very unwilling to believe all in Vain. But thoſe he convers'd with, the wiſe Men he conſulted, and his Wife too, could read him his Doom: *If* Mordecai *be*, &c.

In which Words are contained.

1. An aſſurance of ſatisfaction to the Brave and Honeſt, the greateſt Bleſſing of this Life; defeat of their Enemies in their Contrivances, and their fall too; *Thou ſhalt not prevail againſt him, but thy ſelf fall before him.*

2. Here's the grand Reaſon of it couch'd in a Suppoſition; if he be numbred amongſt the Favourites of God, all attempts then are truly Vain; *If* Mordecai *be of the Seed of the Jews.* Which import this; *'Tis ſufficiently known how the God of the Jews takes notice of, and defends his People; we have inſtances innumerable of his Protection of, his great Care for, and Kindneſs to them: If therefore this be one of them, if he has any right to their Promiſes, if he be of the Seed of* Abraham, *in vain you attempt his Deſtruction, 'tis to no purpoſe to contrive againſt him; for he alſo will moſt certainly eſcape, and overcome you too; if he be of the Jews you cann't prevail, but your ſelf ſhall fall before him.*

I ſhall not now undertake to diſcover all the various Priviledges, the large Immunities and Bleſſings extraordinary of the People of the *Jews* as ſuch; but attending chiefly to the Reaſon of them, which alſo derives the ſame upon us and all good Chriſtians, their being his *choſen People*, his *Inheritance*, his *Favourites*, ſhall confine the reſidue of this Diſcourſe to the proof and application of this Propoſition.

That the People of God, all Good, Honeſt and Obedient Men, have the greateſt ſecurity imaginable of extraordinary aſſiſtance to withſtand their *Enemies*, prevail againſt and overcome them.

And this I ſhall endeavour to evince by theſe two plain Arguments.

1. The Almighty has enſured it, the Mouth of the Lord has ſaid it.

2. We have many noble Inſtances of the Performance: We are not to ſeek for particular Caſes of God's Care, ſome few Remarks of his Love and Kindneſs to them, but we meet with them as oft as we Converſe with him; we cannot but ſee them, when ever we look into our Bibles.

1. *God* himſelf has declared for his *Church*, and the faithful Obedient *Sons* of it; he has

aſſured

assured all Nations he will defend them, he will be with them to the end of the World.

The 89th *Psalm* is as plain in this as Heart can wish, and the Holy Ghost as particular and expressive of this great Care of the Church, acknowledging God to be *the glory of his Peoples strength, in whose favour they shall be exalted*; and again, *The Lord their defence, the holy one of* Israel *their King*, ver. 16. *and* ver. 22. *Upon whom the Enemy shall not exact, nor the Son of Wickedness afflict them: I will beat down their Foes before their Faces, and Plague them that hate them; my Faithfulness and my Mercy shall be with them, and in my Name shall their Horn be exalted*, ver. 26. *They shall cry unto me thou art our Father, our God, and the Rock of our Salvation*, ver. 28. *My Mercy will I keep with them for evermore, and my Covenant shall stand fast with them; their Seed will I make to endure for ever, and their Throne as the Days of Heaven.* Again, ver. 36. *Their Seed shall endure for ever, and as the Sun before me; it shall be established for ever as the Moon, and as the faithful Witness in Heaven. My loving Kindness will I not take away from them, nor suffer my Faithfulness to fail; my Covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my Lips; once have I sworn by my Holiness, and I will not lie unto them.*

Again

Again in the 91ſt *Pſal.* 'tis expreſſed, that *they abide under the ſhadow of the Almighty, who is their refuge and fortreſs,* ver. 2. *He will deliver them from the ſnare of the Fowler, the noiſom Peſtilence; his Truth is their Shield and Buckler,* ver. 3, 4. *They ſhall fear no Terror by Night, nor Arrow by Day, nor Peſtilence in Darkneſs, nor Deſtruction at Noon,* &c. Again, ver. 10. *No evil ſhall befall them; he ſhall give his Angels charge over them, to keep them in all their ways*; and ſo on, till at the laſt Verſe he ſays, *With long Life will I ſatisfie them, and ſhew them my Salvation.*

Theſe inſtances are ſo Plain, that you need not be reminded of any other; ſo expreſſive of Divine Love, ſo abundantly kind and obliging, as certainly to be able to ſtifle all unmanly Fears and Jealouſies, to encourage and wonderfully enliven Chriſtians; eſpecially conſidering that this *God*, he who promiſes all this, is Faithful, Boundleſs Love, and Infinitely True; he cannot lie nor deceive, but is the ſame *Yeſterday, to Day,* and *for Ever,* Good and Gracious, Loving and Merciful. But,

2. We have greater Encouragements; *God* has not only promiſed it, not only ſaid it, but done it alſo.

All

All Places of the World, all Ages witneſs the Love of *God*, his Care of his faithful People, his Concern for his *Church*, by innumerable Inſtances of wonderful Deliverances of it, and pouring down abundance of Plagues upon the Enemies thereof.

'Twould be Tedious to inſiſt here alſo, ſince your ſelves are ſo well able to repeat and reckon Particulars.

The State of the *Jews*, theſe mention'd in the Text, afford enough to Reflect on; if we Remember what ſtrange Miracles *God* wrought to Preſerve them, and how ſignally he Proſper'd whatever they went about, when he Afflicted thoſe that hated them, with the moſt remarkable *Plagues* that the World ever heard of; and in the mean time maintained them Free, Brisk and Lively, *not one Feeble Perſon amongſt them.*

But to paſs by that of the *Jews*, let us next Inſtance in the State of *Chriſtians*, where we find the *Finger of God* no leſs remarkable in Deliverances.

What Oppoſition the firſt Maintainers and Propagators of the Goſpel met withal, who knows not, that knows and believes that *Chriſt Jeſus and his Apoſtles* were ever upon Earth?

How was our *Saviour* himſelf at firſt hunted after? How early was he compell'd to a ſevere kind of Baniſhment, that ſecured him from the bloody Rage of reſolute *Herod?*

But when he came to appear more Publick in the World, and began to Preach, he was indeed fill'd full of Reproach; Hunted after and Perſecuted, Abuſed continually and Derided, truly Afflicted and Tormented, and at laſt you know how Barbarouſly, how Ignominiouſly Crucified, that his Doctrine and he (as thoſe his Malicious Confederate Enemies intended) might Periſh together.

And here was *God* pleaſed to Baffle and Confound thoſe Adverſaries of Peace and Order, and the moſt Excellent Religion; their Contrivance failed, their Plot had not its full Effect; he ſuffered indeed, but thereby his Doctrine acquir'd the better Acceptation; for he roſe again to Witneſs the Truth, the Divinity of it, and afreſh recommend it to his Followers: *Then mightily grew the Word of God and encreaſed.*

And now this Doctrine obtains upon more, tho' the Poor, mean and inconſiderable Perſons; it being ſome time before it could be received in *Courts* and *Noble Families.* And hear how remarkable was their Fury, their Rage

Rage againſt thoſe Poor Men and their Families? Of whom the Scripture gives this dreadful Account, that *they were tortured, not accepting Deliverance, that they might obtain a better Reſurrection,* Heb. 11. *And had trial of cruel Mockings and Scourgings, of Bonds and Impriſonments; they were Stoned, were Sawn aſunder, were Tempted, were Slain with the Sword; they wandred about in Sheep-skins and Goat-skins, being Deſtitute, Afflicted, Tormented; they wander'd in Deſarts and Mountains, were hid in Dens and Caves of the Earth*; they ſuffered the real Perſecution of the Scorn and Malice of the worſt of Men, *of whom the World was not worthy:* Still wonderfully encreaſed the number of thoſe that believed; and all theſe ſevere Perſecutions by Divine Order, made way for ſounder Faith, *Chriſtians* encreaſed by them, *God* had Honour by them, and thoſe bloody Men themſelves grew Weary, admired their Courage and Patience, and were often aſhamed.

If we attend now to our *Reform'd Church*, reduced as near as poſſible to the Purity of that firſt, you cannot but diſcover *God Almighty* providing for it, the *Lord of Hoſts* defending it.

And now that we ſpeak of *Proteſtants*, and *Reformed Churches*, it muſt be here owned to the Honour of our preſent *Senators*, that tho' they have enlarged their Favours to all Proteſtants; yet they have diſtinguiſhed the Notion, and particularly deſigned their Patronage to this the *Eſtabliſhed Church of* England *by Law*: Sound and Convincing in its *Principles*, Eaſie in its *Service*, Wiſe, Decent and Inſtructive in its *Articles* and *Canons*; Admired by all the Brave, Pious and Learned, nay even amongſt the *Romaniſts*, *Abroad*; Slighted, Miſrepreſented, Envyed and Murmur'd at by ſome Wilful Ones, ſome Ignorant, ſome Wretchedly Prejudiced, and others Untowardly Malicious, and theſe here at *Home*.

This *Church* has ever ſince its Eſtabliſhment been the Envy both of *Papiſt* and *Sectary*; Threatned and Plotted againſt by them both; but by the Bleſſing of *God*, and Courage of *Good Men*, now begins more glorioufly to lift up her Head, than lately ſhe was able to do: She has been forced to Struggle formerly, but yet as ſhe Bravely Withſtood, ſo ſhe Happily has Out-lived all her *Storms*.

Why elſe was ſhe not overcome by invincible *Armado's*, polluted with ſeverer *Inquiſitions*,

sitions, ſtrangled with *Bulls* and *Breves*, which the great Patron of that Traſh has within theſe two Ages been ſo prodigal of?

And who but *God* denied ſucceſs to thoſe later Deſigns againſt the *Head* and true *Patrons* of this Church? Who elſe could prevent thoſe ſo intended bloody *Maſſacres*, and inhumane *Aſſaſſinations*? Who beſides him could diſcover the dark *Treacheries*, diſſolve *Covenants* and *holy Leagues*, and ſuperſede Traiterous, tho' ſo ſpecious, *Aſſociations*?

Why was not our *Land* e're this changed into a Sea of *Blood*, our *Churches* made Deſolate, our *God* and our *Religion* Baniſhed? For all this has more than once been intended us: But that *God*, who is the *God* of Peace and Order, who is Gentleneſs and Patience it ſelf, who wills not Ruin and Deſtruction, but Salvation; this *God* is our *Deliverer*; 'tis thro' him, and him alone, that we have hitherto, and ſtill hope ſhall Eſcape: We are of the Seed of *Abraham*; we are of the Number of the *Faithful*; of thoſe who in the Purity of Religion have Devoted themſelves to *God*, to Reaſon, and Dutiful Compliance with his Laws: And (Bleſſed be *God*) our Enemies, the Enemies of this *Order*, of our *Peace* and *Religion*, have not *Prevailed*, but have *began to Fall*;

Fall; we have Hopes, nay, we may have Confidence, if only we be True to our *Religion*, if we Live up to the Rules of our *Church*, if we do the *Works* of our *Father Abraham*, that they ſhall never prevail againſt, but moſt certainly fall before us.

And here it will not be out of the way to advert ſomewhat of the manner of *God*'s Defence of his *Church* and *People*; 'tis the ſecureſt Imaginable. For,

1. He reſolves their Deſigns againſt them ſhall not prevail, they ſhall come to nothing: And then (which is all that can be wiſhed.)

2. The Plotters themſelves, the very Contrivers ſhall be taken in their own Snare, they ſhall certainly fall.

1. Their Deſigns againſt *God*'s Church and People ſhall come to nothing: The Breath of God ſhall Blaſt them, in his Wrath he will Confound them. What became of that early Conſpiracy of *Korah* and his Company, againſt *Moſes* and *Aaron*, one of them the *Prince*, and the other the *Prieſt*, and both *Ordain'd of God?*

What became of thoſe great Reſolves of *Saul* againſt *David* firſt, and then of the Rebellion of *Abſalom* againſt him?

What

What became of the Deſign of the *Caldeans* againſt *Shadrach*, *Meſhach* and *Abednego*?

And where ended the Plot of the *Preſidents* and *Princes* to *Belſhazar* againſt holy *Daniel*; with Multitudes of other Inſtances you will meet with in holy Writ? *God* himſelf undertook them all; their aim he ſaw was at him, at his Cauſe and Glory; he therefore prevented, he it was who alone defeated. But,

2. This is not all; they alſo ſhall fall before thoſe they intended to Ruin.

Korah and his mighty Company, with the 250 *Princes of the Congregation*; thoſe ſo Grand Men, Men of Renown, who Conſpired againſt their Lawful *Prince*, their Authoriz'd *High Prieſt*, and Eſtabliſhed *Religion*, were all on a ſudden Impriſon'd in the Bowels of the Earth, and envelop'd in the wonderful Folds of pitileſs Clay.

Abſalom himſelf, the Plotter againſt his *Father* and *King*, is trapt in a Tree, and there hang'd betwixt *Heaven and Earth*.

So the unmerciful *Flames* ſalute and enjoy their Contrivers, for Innocent *Shadrach*, *Meſhach*, and *Abednego*: And the devouring *Lions*, with no leſs Appetite, receive honeſt *Daniel*'s *Adverſaries*.

And

And our great *Contriver* in the Text, this ſo Famous and Honourable *Haman*, was himſelf advanc'd to that Height, had the ſame End and Fate he deſign'd for *Mordecai*.

'Tis needleſs to Inſtance farther here; and 'tis now ſufficiently Evident, that *God* Eſpouſes the Quarrel of his Servants; he receives the Alarm himſelf; and he Vindicates, he Defends, he Commands Safety and Deliverance for them.

Strangers to him, and his Laws, could not but take notice of it; and wicked *Haman*'s own Council aſſured it him before it came to paſs: *Then ſaid his wiſe Men, and* Zereſh *his Wife to him, if* Mordecai *be of the Seed of the Jews, before whom thou haſt begun to fall, thou ſhalt not prevail againſt him, but ſhalt certainly fall before him.*

And now who amongſt us but Eſteems it his only Buſineſs to Secure, to Preſerve an Intereſt in this *God*; this *God* who is able to Deliver us; this *God* who is Willing and Ready; who never fails them that ſeek him in Spirit and Truth, but remains Faithful to the end? The main of the Application then ſhall be ſumm'd up in theſe Three Things.

1. That

1. That we admire and adore the excellency of this *Religion*, in the defence of which we find *God* so much concern'd.

2. That we Praise and Glorifie this *God* for it, and that he was pleas'd to admit us to the Knowledge and Exercise of it. And,

3. That we take care to Live up to it, Faithfully and Honestly to Practise all the Various Duties of it. And,

1. We may well admire the excellency of this Religion, this *our Established Church*; the wonderful Charms, the inexpressible Benefits thereof. Our *Happiness* as far thereby exceeds other *Nations*, as pure *Fruit* exceeds *Husks*, or the glorious body of the *Sun* transcends that fantastical Glimmering Light of *Rottenness*.

Oh the *Depth* and *Wisdom* of its *Author*! Whose Ways are past finding out, whose Mercies are innumerable; whose Tasks and Commands are all pure, and pleasant, and peaceable; the only delight of reasonable Creatures, the truest satisfaction and content of Souls, the quintessence of Joy, and most ravishing Delight, the Pleasure of glorified *Saints and Angels*, who own no other Happiness than to do *God*'s Will.

Oh the *Wiſdom* and *Excellency* of theſe ways of *God*! The Worth and Eaſe of the *Orders* and *Duties* of our *Church*! They are the moſt raviſhing Delights in Purſuit; they are purely comfortable in their Exerciſe and Adminiſtration; and only Satisfactory afterwards; and all the while of themſelves able to confront the Huffs, the Flouts of the moſt hardned Sinners; to baffle all the proud daring Attempts of Ignorant, Malicious and Profane Enemies; to confound the Works of Darkneſs, even the whole Legion of Infernal Enemies.

2. *Praiſe the Lord then, Oh our Souls,* for theſe inexpreſſible Benefits; which is the ſecond Inference. Be we ever ready to adore and magnifie the Glory of this our Good *God.* *O come hither and behold the Works of God then, what Wonders he doth for the Children of Men*! He ſubdueth all our Enemies for us, and wageth all our Wars; he undertakes our Safety and Deliverance in all times of Danger, and himſelf Anſwers all the proud Challenges of the moſt impudent Oppoſers; he finds out the deepeſt Contrivances, and anſwers them firſt with a pure Defeat, then with a return of them upon their own Heads.

Surely

Surely then *God* is Gracious to us, may we all ſay; *Verily there is a God that judgeth in the Earth.* To him therefore, from *Men* and *Angels*, and all *Created Beings*, in Heaven, on the Earth, and in the Waters, let there ever be aſcribed, as is moſt Due, all *Honour*, *Power*, *Glory* and *Might*; *for his Name only is Excellent, his Praiſe above Heaven and Earth.*

Laſtly, Hence muſt we inferr the infallible Neceſſity of our doing, our applying our ſelves conſtantly to the Duties of this our Religion; that the wonderful Benefits thereof might be made over to us for Righteouſneſs, for Sanctification, for Redemption.

'Tis unpardonable to be negligent in this. We are admitted to Converſe with a Religion, whoſe Charms enſlave the *Devil* and all his *Agents*; whoſe glorious Beauty and Excellency awes the whole World, the great *Potentates*, and thoſe who pretend to Thunder upon Earth.

We are Members of ſuch a *Church*, engaged in and by all endearing Obligations invited to the Bleſſings of ſuch a *Religion*, whoſe Duties are the pureſt Eaſe, whoſe Laws are the only Pleaſures of the World, and whoſe Rewards are Glories, and Crowns eternal, Happineſſes beyond all Expreſſion; whoſe *Author*

and great *Patron* is *God*, the only *Potentate*, the *King* of *Kings*, and *Lord* of *Lords*, *who alone does Wonders*.

We have the Happineſs of ſuch Doctrines, that not only makes us like *God*, but aſſures us even of the very Happineſs of *God*: For *God is Goodneſs it ſelf, and he is infinitely Happy in the Injoyment of himſelf*; and our Religion, our Church and holy Doctrines, are nothing elſe but this Goodneſs.

In a word, we have the Honour to enjoy and live under the influence of ſuch a Religion, that only can ſecure us in all Dangers and Streights, that can free us from all Enemies, and at laſt will uſher us to the *Author* of it, *God* himſelf; to his right Hand, there to perpetuate Praiſes, Anthems and Hallelujahs; the Buſineſs, the only Happineſs, of glorified Saints.

And do we ſtill want Encouragements to the Duties of this Religion; this Religion that fights for us, that overcomes all Enemies; this Church that is to us all Safety and true Happineſs here, and will be eternal Reward and Glory hereafter?

Be aſhamed, Oh our Souls, at ſuch Folly and Madneſs; and never any more let us Court our Enemies, and our Ruin; never any

any more entertain Sin, the Enemy of our Church, of our Peace, of our Eaſe here, and of our Glory and Satisfaction hereafter.

We know that *to whom much is given, of them will much be required*; let us therefore Live like thoſe that know it; employ our Talents to the beſt Advantage, that when our *Lord comes he may find us ſo doing*, and reward us with a Crown of Glory.

Never, Oh never let theſe our extraordinary Bleſſings uſher in or turn to Curſes; never let them be aſſurances to us of Blood, of Death, eternal Death and Deſtruction: But if there be in us any Chriſtian Ingenuity, any Love for Honeſty, any careful Prudence, let us fear and be aſhamed to make our own Talents, our Condemnation; our great Priviledges, our Executioners.

But let us ſhew what we are by our ſevere and exact Converſation; let us live up to the holy Rules of our Church; *let our Light ſo ſhine before Men, that they may ſee our good Works*; let us be Religious indeed, and take Pleaſure in doing what God expects we ſhould be and do; that his Name may be glorified, and he ſtill take Pleaſure to be amongſt us; that he may guide us into all Truth, preſerve us in it, defend both it and us; and at laſt having

ſcat-

ſcatter'd the Enemies of it, Bleſs us wi h its Fruit, Salvation of our Souls, Eternal Peace and Reſt, the Joys that are laid up at God's Right Hand.

And becauſe the ſumm of what has been ſaid, and that that is moſt naturally Deducible from the Text, is, that we make it our Buſineſs to do the Buſineſs of our Religion, leſt we Forfeit our Right to its Glories, our Title to its large Benefits and Immunities; I take leave to recommend two or three of thoſe excellent *Virtues* and *Graces*, without which we can neither be Religious nor truly Chriſtian. The

1. Is Innocency of Life. To Wrong, to Defraud and Contrive Miſchief, is the Work of thoſe whom our Church, our Religion, Confronts; who are profeſs'd Enemies to that Peace and Satisfaction we look for in the ways of Godlineſs.

How then can we eſcape, how can we think to be bleſs'd with the Bleſſings of ſo excellent a Religion; one of which is deliverance from Enemies; if we plunge our ſelves into their Condition; if we embrace their Dark, Uneaſie and Miſchievous Tempers?

This was the cauſe that made all the People about *Haman* pronounce this Doom to him:

He

He muſt be contriving Evil againſt *Mordecai*; Ruin and Deſtruction to his peaceable and quiet Neighbours; and therefore they told him that it would be his own at laſt.

Thus it appears very unreaſonable, that we ſhould expect the Security of a Noble Religion, when we ſhall act contrary to it in any unjuſt, irregular or abuſive Behaviour. The

2. Virtue now to be recommended, is Meekneſs; to be quiet, not over buſie, not turbulent.

To be clamorous, noiſie and troubleſome, is to be a Fool of the firſt Magnitude; and that makes but a poor advance to the glories of a Chriſtian; whoſe Buſineſs is tranquility and peace, a calm and a ſedate Carriage; that's *the Wiſdom from above, that is firſt Pure, then Peaceable, Gentle, and eaſie to be Intreated*, ſays the Apoſtle.

None ſo great Slaves as they who are devoted to unruly Paſſions; they affront others, they ſcandalize any Profeſſion, and continually Torment themſelves; and always to be ſo, is indeed worſe than to be a meer Bruit.

The famous Man in the Text was ſuch an one; Envious and Revengeful, Clamorous and

and Hitting; grudging the Welfare and Life of the poor and oppreſſed *Jew*; he tormented therefore himſelf for a while, and then received the truly proportion'd reward to ſuch a Spirit; this doom of his Wife, *Thou ſhalt not prevail, but certainly fall before him.* Another,

3. Virtue now very ſeaſonably to be urged, is Contentedneſs; to ſit quietly every one under his own Vine when he may; and that we do not buſie our ſelves about Things too Great, or too High for us.

God has given every one of us enough to make himſelf Happy withal, if he will be content, and uſe his Talent the right way. But to look higher than either our Condition, or Quality, or Imployment will honeſtly encourage us; to roam Impatiently after greater Matters, is to do Violence to Providence, and a perfect Inſult and Rebellion againſt *God.*

No one but muſt account it a vile affront to the *Majeſty* of *Heaven*, when we refuſe or look ſlightly upon what *God* has given us, and chuſe rather to Carve for our ſelves: Nor can we expect otherwiſe, but that then every Bit ſhould prove Gall and Bitterneſs to our Souls, and we ſhould drink down

Poiſon

Poiſon in a Draught. And therefore an evenneſs of Temper is highly to be embraced by us, notwithſtanding the various and unexpected Revolutions of things about us.

For what and who are we that would quarrel at Nature, and correct the providential Courſe of Things? Did we make the World, and adorn it with its Beauty and Order? No, nor are we to ſettle its Conſtitution, or alter it according to our Humours.

There are many devices in a Man's Heart, (ſaid the wiſe Man) *Prov.* 19. 21. *But the Counſel of the Lord that ſhall ſtand.* And (ſays *David*) let the Earth be never ſo unquiet, the Lord will be King.

'Tis the Lord then, let him do with us whatſoever is good in his Eyes: But for us, let us ſit ſtill, and embrace our Condition with a ſedate and calm compoſure of Spirit; let us curb Paſſion, and that furious Zeal that hurries Men into Perdition; ſo ſhall we acquire that glorious Character which was given to that Man in the Goſpel, on whom our Saviour wrought a Miracle, and caſt out a *Legion* of *Devils*, *that he ſat cloathed, and in his right Mind.*

4. The next advice, and now but too ſeaſonable, is, that we lay aſide thoſe unhappy

Diſtinctions, and Names of Reproach, that are ſported amongſt us, to divide us, and to diſturb our Peace; and that *we Love as Brethren*; that we would *go into the Houſe of God* together *like Friends*; like Men of Peace and Chriſtian Charity: But however, if that cannot yet be, but private Opinions will ſtill prevent that happy Union, that we do not purſue on another like Enemies, but ſhew our ſelves true Members of Chriſt, by doing all the Good we can to thoſe who Differ from us, let their returns be what they pleaſe.

Alas, what can it avail us to Triumph over the Miſtakes, or Bigottry and Ignorance of other Men? Or, what can it avail them to beſpatter us with their falſe Reports, backbiting Inſinuations, and load us with unmerciful Cenſures? What can any or all theſe things Profit, when we ſhall be truly reſtored to our Senſes, when we ſhall be alarm'd with a ſudden departure hence, and be earneſtly apprehenſive of our approach to the future Eternal State?

We know we are here to Day, and gone to Morrow: And by the conſtant Changes and Revolutions amongſt us; by the frequent ſudden Mortalities, and thoſe ſeveral Warnings we have from all Ages and Conditions,

tions, we all ſee in whoſe Power we are; who it is that has right over us; and that as he can when he pleaſes, ſo certainly (which may be very ſhortly) he will remove us all hence.

And there in the Grave we ſhall be all equal; none better, none greater, none richer than another.

It will therefore demonſtrate us to be wiſe Men, as well as good Chriſtians, if we would lay by thoſe cenſorious uncharitable Characters, and noiſie Calumnies, that one ſort of People have lately with too much guſt loaded another with; if we would mind all our own Buſineſs, ſpeak of Men and Things with Charity, excuſe little Ignorances, and unhappy Miſtakes, mildly correct Faults, and endeavour humbly to reform our Brethren and Neighbours, and by all inſtances of Friendſhip offer to do good to all; then no one, nor any thing, would ever make us uneaſie; but we ſhould enjoy Peace, and a quiet Mind in this World, and eternal Life and Glory in that that is to come.

5. Therefore 'tis neceſſary here to recommend that moſt noble Grace of *Humility*. Pride made the firſt *Devil*; and there is nothing more Odious to a Saint. It was too

much the ſtudy of *Haman* here, and confounded him at laſt with an irrecoverable Fall.

But theſe Virtues beſpeak the truly Chriſtian Temper; where-ever they appear they proclaim true Comfort, being the great Duties of our Religion, the undeniable Glory of our Church, by which we muſt ſtand if ever. What remains yet to be urged, Laſtly, is the great Duty of the Day, Prayer, Faſting and Charity.

For the two former, we have noble Encouragement and Admonition from our *Bleſſed Saviour.* Our Religion, our Holy Church, our Government, our Nation, have many Enemies; abroad are profeſs'd and open one's, all whom, keeping true to our God, we are able to dare, and may defie: But beſides theſe we have worſe at home, our Sins, our many Provocations, our moſt wretched Deſerts; theſe are the ſecret Enemies, lying in Ambuſh, always ready to Surprize us; theſe are the *Evil Spirits* that have enter'd us; theſe would ſoon deſtroy our Land and People; they would tear us to Pieces, and expoſe us to Fire and Water, and every thing that can Deſtroy; theſe are able to do worſe by our Nation, than that evil Spirit did to the poor Man's Son, mention'd

St.

St. *Mark* the 9th. Now for us to be free from theſe Enemies and their dire Conſequences, let us obſerve well our Saviour's Words, when he went about to caſt out that unclean pernicious Spirit; *this ſort* (ſays he) *comes not out but by Prayer and Faſting*.

Now that we may be delivered from all our Enemies, both abroad and at home, let us all devoutly beg of God his Pardon, his Protection and Deliverance; that he who is the God of Peace, would maintain Peace, Love and Charity amongſt us, now and ever; that he would root up all thoſe Seeds of Schiſm and Sedition, of Unmercifulneſs and Diſcontent, which are ſowed by the Enemy of Mankind, and grow up amongſt us; that our Land might be diſpoſſeſs'd of, and guarded from all thoſe Creatures of Prey and Blood, who are Ravenous and Greedy to Devour: And that all we, fill'd with the Spirit of Peace and Meekneſs, of Submiſſion and Contentedneſs, of Mercy and Forbearance, may live in Love, and in our right Minds, Glorifie God, and Sin no more.

And then for Faſting: Would we be freed from all thoſe Evils that we are overwhelmed with; from Fears and Jealouſies, from Diſtruſts and Doubts, from Wars and Rumors

Rumors of Wars? Would we escape those Evils we are threatned withal, and in danger of, and live free from Persecutions and Distress; from the loss of Friends and Estates, from the bloody Sword and sudden Death? And would we still enjoy our admirable Religion, and most excellent ways of Worship, which will make our Consciences our Friends here, and the blessed *Saviour* of the World, ours hereafter? We then must quell and subdue all Lusts and Passion, all inordinate Desires, vain Love, and silly Doting upon any of these things below; that our Souls may not be Clouded or Darkned with them, but in all possible Purity declare the honour of God; and we influenced by the Divine Spirit, having our Minds purified and enlightned, rejoicing in Truth and Love, in Gentleness and Patience, and keeping our selves stedfast even in Long-suffering, may enjoy the fulness of Pleasure, the everlasting Good; nor must we omit that that is to perfect the Duties of this Day, that noble Act of *Charity*; *Charity*, which is the *fulfilling of the Law*, and summ of all the Gospel; *Charity*, which demonstrates us to be Christians, which improves and benefits the World; which in the sight of *God* is of great Price;

and

and which does truly prove our *Faith*, our *Prayer* and *Fasting*.

In a word, would we be Happy? Thus it is that we must be Religious; would we enjoy Peace and Quiet? Would we escape all our Enemies? Thus we must be Religious. Our Religion is Armour and Castles, and all Fortifications: We need not look further for Alliances or Confederates; 'tis but to live up to our Religion, to our Church, and we cannot but be in Safety; 'tis for us but to do the Works of our Father *Abraham*, thus to be of the Seed of the Jews, to make our Duty our Business, and live the Life of Good and Honest Men, doing Justice, loving Mercy, hating Cruelty, and perfecting Holiness in the fear of God; this is truly to be at Peace and Quiet here, and will usher us to Everlasting Rest hereafter.

Now grant, O Lord, as thou hast shewed us much Mercy in giving us great Blessings, the Blessings of Christianity, and of the most excellent of all Religions, let us live according to it; and because there is none other that fighteth for us, give thou Peace in our time, O Lord; *and grant that we may behave our selves so Wisely, so Piously, while Members of this Church* Militant, *that this*

Life

Life ended, we may be admitted to the Church Triumphant, *to Celebrate thy Glory in Eternal Anthems,* thro' Jesus Christ our Lord; to whom, with the Father and Blessed Spirit, be ascrib'd, Blessing, Honour, and Power, Might, Majesty, and Dominion, both now, and for ever. *Amen.*

FINIS.

ADVERTISEMENT.

TWO Sermons lately Preached at the Parish Church of St. *Magnus the Martyr.* By *Richard Holland,* M. A.

The First, At the Baptizing of some Persons of Riper Years, brought up amongst Quakers and Anabaptists. *The Second Edition.*

The Second, On the Good *Samaritan.*

Both Sold by *J. Back,* at the *Black-Boy* on *London-Bridge.*